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# Theodore Roosevelt

*An Address by*

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Minister of the First Church of Oak Park



*Theodore Roosevelt*

*Delivered in*

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# Theodore Roosevelt

By the Rev. William E. Barton, D. D., LL. D.

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A year and a few additional weeks have passed since the death of Theodore Roosevelt. It is time to measure our sense of loss, and to estimate with such approach to accuracy as may at this time be possible, the value of his contribution to American life. We cannot do this fully, and it will be many years before we can do it adequately; but we can approach it more nearly than would have been possible a year ago, and we gain a measure of value in making the attempt at such estimate in close conjunction with our celebration of the birthdays of Lincoln and Washington.

Theodore Roosevelt died Jan. 6, 1919, aged 60 years. He was born Oct. 27, 1858. We count that young, and he was young. But he was 5 years older than Lincoln, and only 6 years younger than Washington. We think of them as old men, and they so thought of themselves. Washington was wont to make mention of his age, and to say as he put on his glasses that his eyes had grown dim in the service of his country. Lincoln, as he left Springfield for his inauguration, told his neighbors that he had lived in that town from his early manhood until now he was leaving it, an old man. Relatively speaking, they both were old; but there was that about Roosevelt which made and kept him characteristically young. His vigor, his spontaneity, his versatility, were of a sort that never permitted us to think of him as a man who was old or even growing old.

## An Outline of His Life

Let us refresh our memory with a brief outline of the life of this remarkable man. Theodore Roosevelt was born in New York City Oct. 27, 1858. His father came of an old New York family. His mother, Martha Bulloch, was of Southern birth, and had two brothers in the Confederate army. Theodore was not precocious, and he suffered throughout his childhood from poor health. In 1869 Mr. Roosevelt took his family to Europe for a year, and Theodore is described on his return in 1870 as a tall, thin lad, with legs like pipe stems.

He entered Harvard College in 1876. He was a lover of athletics, having grown stronger by persistent exercise, and he was a student of nature and of history. He was in his college days, a Sunday School teacher, and of a rather militant sort.

He was graduated from Harvard in 1880, a few months before

he was 22, and on his birthday in that same year, he married Miss Alice Hathaway Lee, who died, Feb. 13, 1884, at the birth of their first child, and within twenty-four hours of the death of Roosevelt's mother.

Before he left Harvard he had written a part of his first book, "The Naval War of 1812," and he continued to be a writer until his death, his greatest literary work being his "Winning of the West."

The death of his father left him a comfortable fortune, but he decided to give his life to the public service. He was elected in 1882 a member of the General Assembly of New York, at a time when Grover Cleveland, then aged 40, was the vigorous young governor.

In 1884 he was a delegate at large to the Republican National Convention, in which he opposed the nomination of James G. Blaine. After that experience, he went to North Dakota, where for nearly two years he lived upon a ranch. At the end of this period, he was in vigorous health, and remained, until his last illness, a man of extraordinary physical and intellectual vigor.

On Dec. 2, 1886, he married Miss Edith Kermit Carrow. Establishing his home in New York, he devoted himself to writing, but was soon in politics again. In 1889, he was appointed Civil Service Commissioner by President Harrison, and was reappointed by President Cleveland, serving six years, and establishing the merit system.

From 1895 to 1897 he was Police Commissioner of the city of New York, and wrought righteousness against mighty odds. In 1897 he became Assistant Secretary of the Navy, a post which came to him because of his first book, "The Naval War of 1812"; but in 1898 he resigned his position to go to Cuba with the "Rough Riders."

On Jan. 1, 1899, he was inaugurated Governor of New York, and in 1900 was elected Vice President. On Sept. 14, 1901, on the death of President McKinley, he became President of the United States, and on Nov. 8, 1904, was elected to succeed himself by the largest popular majority ever received by a presidential candidate.

In 1909 and 1910 he hunted big game in Africa, and in 1913 made a tour of South America. He was an unsuccessful candidate for President against Mr. Taft in 1912. Long a contributor to magazines, he became corresponding editor of the Outlook in 1909, and continued in that position until 1914. He was nominated for President by the Progressive Party in 1916, but declined and supported Judge Hughes, who was not elected.

On the outbreak of the World War in 1914, he vigorously criticized Mr. Wilson's administration for not protesting against the invasion of Belgium, and for its conservative policy after the sinking of the Lusitania. When America entered the war, he earnestly desired liberty to organize and lead a division of the American army in France, but his services were declined by President Wilson.



He gave his sons to the service, and one of them lost his life fighting gallantly. Sorrowing deeply for his dead son, he went steadily forward in his own work for the nation.

Seriously weakened by an injury received by him in South America, he was taken sick, and died, Jan. 6, 1919.

### Roosevelt as I Knew Him

I have not known any President intimately, but I have met personally and known somewhat Presidents Harrison, Cleveland, McKinley, Roosevelt, Taft and Wilson—a half dozen or so of our more recent presidents, and have very clear impressions of them all. One gets out of even brief and casual meetings impressions that give distinctness to what one reads and hears about a man. Not because I knew him intimately, but because I met or heard him a good many times at different periods of his career, I speak of Theodore Roosevelt as I knew him.

I first met him in 1895, when he was Police Commissioner of New York. He came to Boston, where I then was a pastor, and spoke in Trinity Church in the interests of Berea College. President Frost of Berea was a guest in my home, and we planned the meeting together. We had secured the consent of the rector, Rev. E. Winchester Donald, to hold the meeting in that church. At a similar meeting, followed by a reception in its parish house, I first met Gen. William Booth. High church Episcopalians criticized Dr. Donald for such uses of the church, but he told me that he submitted the matter to his head vestryman, Robert Treat Paine, "and Bob Paine said, 'May God's lightning strike Trinity Church when it becomes too good a place to be used in such a cause!'"

We had previously asked Chauncey M. Depew to be our speaker. What we wanted, frankly, was some one who would draw a large and influential audience for President Frost would tell about Berea. Senator Depew consented to come; but afterward he looked over his clippings and saw how the Boston Transcript had picked him up on some historical inaccuracies when he, a year or two previously, had spoken before the Congregational Club, and he decided not to risk another visit to Boston with an address as a subject on which he could not claim large knowledge. So President Frost ran to New York to see Dr. Parkhurst, who said, "I would come, but there is a man who can serve you better; he is going to be the biggest man in New York if not in the nation." So Roosevelt was invited and came. He did not know Berea personally, but he believed in it, and he spoke earnestly.

I sat in the end chair in the chancel, where I had a good side view of him while he spoke. What impressed me most was the power of his jaw as he bit off and spat out his words. He was in dead earnest; he was interested in Berea so far as he knew it, and he gave a good and effective talk.

I met him next in the fall of 1898, shaking his hand in the crowd at the close of his first Lowell lecture. I had a seat well to the front in a packed hall. Boston had not as yet seen her own

boys who had gone to Cuba; but Roosevelt, by dint of the Round Robin and insistence had brought his troops to Montauk, and had broken away for this series of lectures. I think it may have been the first time he had been in evening clothes for some time. He did not come in khaki and rough-rider hat as later he sometimes did. Boston went wild over him; and at that meeting Roosevelt did a characteristically modest thing—if you know what that means. For men who are most conscious of their powers have all of them a certain kind of modesty, and even Roosevelt had a little of it. On that day Boston and Baltimore had played the final game in a tied score in baseball, and Boston had come out amazingly ahead. We had read it in the afternoon papers and been pleased, and forgotten it when we went to hear Roosevelt. When he was introduced, and stood facing his audience, brown as a nut and hard as nails, and “feeling bully,” the audience gave him a great and noisy salutation. Roosevelt’s voice had a habit of breaking into a funny falsetto when he said anything that he knew to be funny. His first sentence broke in the middle. Pretending that the demonstration was not for himself but in honor of Boston’s victory, he said, “I think the score was—**twelve to two!**” The “twelve to two” was in the funny little squeak, and was followed by a demonstration even more hearty than the first. The lectures, I may mention, were good; excepting those by Henry Drummond, they were the most popular Lowell lectures I remember to have heard. He knew his theme, the relation of early inhabitants to permanent population, and he used much of the material of his “Winning of the West.”

I left Boston in 1899, and early in 1900 I went to New York to attend the Ecumenical Missionary Conference in Carnegie Hall. At Fort Wayne, we took on another Pullman, in which I found ex-President Benjamin Harrison, on his way to New York to preside at that meeting. I introduced myself, and he said, “Sit down; I want you to help me. I promised to preside at this meeting without realizing what I was getting into. Tell me about these men whom I am to introduce.”

He spread out his program, a very elaborate affair, and made notes on the margin as I told him about some of the men who were announced to speak. On one evening President McKinley was to be there, and on the same night Mr. Roosevelt, then governor of New York. I said, “I have met both of those men, but I think I need not tell you anything about either of them.”

He said that he did not need any information about McKinley, and he then spoke at length and very interestingly about Roosevelt. He said, “I gave him his first national appointment in 1889 on the Civil Service Commission, and have been watching him with great interest ever since. He is a man of great power and great ambition, and he has not yet reached his limit. There is just one difficulty about Roosevelt; he is determined to bring in the millennium before sundown.”

The political pot was already boiling, and politicians and reporters were buzzing around Carnegie Hall wondering what was

the significance of the coming together of McKinley, Roosevelt and Harrison. Harrison was not a candidate and could afford to joke about it; and he used his prerogatives as presiding officer to get a little fun out of the situation. McKinley and Roosevelt both spoke heartily in favor of missions; Roosevelt drawing on his material from his early life upon the ranch, when he saw the effects of missions among the Indians. It was the only time I ever saw three Presidents, past, present and future, together on one platform; and I am not sure whether the same thing has ever occurred excepting on that night.

It has been my privilege to attend a good many national conventions of political parties. I have seen Roosevelt nominated for Vice President, and twice nominated for President. He was in Chicago when he was nominated Vice President and knew that the plan was to shelve him, and resisted it; but really I am sure he wanted it; that is to say, while his judgment was against it, he really felt the urge within him to get that much nearer the presidency. His renomination after the death of McKinley was a foregone conclusion, and was the tamest national convention I have ever seen, though much effort was made to pump enthusiasm into it.

I attended the "Bull Moose Convention" and served as chaplain at one of its sessions when he was nominated. But Roosevelt was in great distress of mind at this time. He had hoped to swing the Republican convention over; and the governors were behind him, but each of those governors had his own political future to attend to, and I could tell one or two funny things which I witnessed while certain governors and senators who had supported Roosevelt but who saw that the nomination of Taft was inevitable found themselves and their own personal political future between the devil and the deep sea.

I heard him in various political speeches, when he stood at Armageddon and battled for the Lord, as he believed and declared. I heard him a few times while he was President, notably at Provincetown, when he laid the cornerstone of the Pilgrim Monument; and I could tell of the resemblances and the contrasts between that occasion and another on the same spot three years later, when William Howard Taft, then President, dedicated the completed shaft, and I sat on the platform where he spoke.

I was not always on the platform. Sometimes I was struggling in the outskirts of the crowd; but I had a platform seat, and a front one, when Roosevelt delivered the Washington address of the Union League Club in the Chicago Auditorium—a place where I have heard several presidents and other noted men, including Cleveland and Taft.

I spoke of the National Republican Convention that nominated Roosevelt after the death of McKinley as devoid of enthusiasm; it was. But that was because no enthusiasm was necessary. I have never seen a man who was more certain to waken enthusiasm than Roosevelt. If I were to pick out the three men

whose passage through the streets of Chicago have always been sure to attract attention, I should name Theodore Roosevelt, Jack Johnson and Billy Sunday.

These things always impressed me when I heard Roosevelt—his abounding vitality, his great moral and physical courage, and his conviction that he was uttering important and serious truth. He was a preacher. So was and is Taft; so was and is Wilson. So, toward the end of his life especially, was Cleveland. So, as everyone knows, is and always has been, William Jennings Bryan. Perhaps no public servant in his generation used Scripture more or used it more aptly than Roosevelt unless it was Thomas B. Reed, whom the State Street Church of Portland educated for the ministry, but who went into politics instead. Roosevelt was a preacher and he meant to be. I heard him many times and on a wide variety of subjects, and he was never so happy and never so effective as when he was able to define his issues in terms of right and wrong, and then preach the gospel of the right as he saw it.

Many of his opinions I did not share; but he was a great and heroic soul.

One thing more I may mention. I doubt if any man, except just now Woodrow Wilson, had a name so widely known or so direct an influence with a definite idea of his personality during his lifetime as Roosevelt. In Paris, in Berlin, in Rome, in Constantinople, in Cairo, in Jerusalem, people knew him, were interested in him, wanted to hear about him. And many of them knew him as "Teddy."

Some years ago Mrs. Barton and I were in Berlin, with a company of friends, and we visited the palace of the gentleman who then was Kaiser. It happened to be our wedding anniversary, and our friends who were with us staged a little reception in our honor in the throne room and, presented to Mrs. Barton a little gift, which she still wears. We came out from this quasi-regal ceremony, and found the sidewalks crowded, and the police keeping the street clear. I inquired of a policeman the occasion of the crowd, and he told me that there was an automobile race across the two continents of Europe and Asia, and the cars were about to arrive in Berlin. They had started from the shore of Spain, had come through France, and were to proceed to Constantinople and through Russia and Siberia and China to the shore of Asia. We stood in line for a few minutes, but grew restless. We wanted to see the race if it did not take too much time. I asked the policeman to inquire where the cars then were and how long we should have to wait. He went away and soon returned with the news that the first car had already reached the outskirts of Berlin and the others were close behind. I inquired further, so as to be sure that his information was reliable; I wanted to know whether he might have gotten his information from some officer just above him who really knew no more than he did. He assured me that it was not so; that his information was authoritative. He had it from an official whose

title he gave me but which I did not understand; he explained that it was the man above the chief of police, and then, to make it perfectly plain, he said, "the same that 'Teddy' was before he became Governor of New York!"

I was in Florence, and I passed the small shop of two marble cutters, brothers, as I learned, who did a business in a place a little below the level of the sidewalk, and who sold their work to tourists. Pasted in the window was a lithograph of Theodore Roosevelt. I stopped to look at it, and just beyond the picture, I saw the man himself. He was attired as a marble cutter, with mallet in one hand and chisel in the other, and he wore the smock of his trade. But no one could fail to see the resemblance to the picture, though the clothing was fully different. He stood in the exact pose of the lithograph, and looked the image of Roosevelt. I went inside, and walked up to him, and his face broke out in one of Roosevelt's own grins, and he approached to greet me.

It was a clever bit of advertising, and the effective use of facial and physical resemblance for purposes of trade and popular interest.

This Italian marble-cutter and his brother knew Theodore Roosevelt as well as I did, not only how he looked, but how he acted, and what in general were his characteristics.

The Berlin policeman knew Roosevelt not only as the man who had been President of the United States; he knew that before he was President he had been Governor, and before he was Governor he had been Police Commissioner. He knew the man and the essential facts of his career; and he knew his pet name, "Teddy."

The last time I met Theodore Roosevelt was on April 28, 1917. The United States had just entered into the world war. He came to Chicago and was tendered a dinner at the La Salle, and afterward spoke to as many men as could be packed into the ballroom of the hotel. He was eager to go overseas. He did not ask to be put in command of a regiment or division, but asked to be made second under an officer of military experience, "Although," he said playfully, "I have commanded a regiment in actual warfare, and have been Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States." In my judgment, the administration made a mistake in not permitting him to go. He would have been a brave officer, and his presence on the battlefield would have been an inspiration to our American soldiers. Who of them would not have gone over the top with him, and done it rejoicing? He had the ability to inspire young men. In the Republican Convention that was gathered to renominate President Taft, there were times when the crowd broke all bounds yelling, "We want Teddy!" Our boys in France wanted him, and he wanted to go. But his message on that day related only incidentally to his personal desire to serve his country on the battlefield. It was the call of America to rise to its opportunity and manifest its mission to the world. While he was speaking it seemed to me that,

One blast upon his bugle-horn

Was worth a thousand men.

I shall always remember him as I saw him last, rejoicing that his country was going forth on a crusade for righteousness, and eager to have a personal share in the danger and the sacrifice and the glory of adventure.

### Roosevelt's Struggles, and Lincoln's

He who studies the career of Theodore Roosevelt can but be impressed by the story of the early struggle, by means of which he attained to vigorous health. At his birth he seemed doomed to be a life-long invalid. Those who knew his childhood remember him first of all as a patient, uncomplaining sufferer. Night after night he gasped for breath and it then seemed he never could become a vigorous, healthy lad. By sheer strength of will he devoted himself to those physical exercises which gave him muscles like steel and a constitution capable of great endurance. Unlike Lincoln, he had no struggle with poverty, but he came to his own through rigorous self-discipline and out of weakness was made strong.

We are impressed, also, with the heroism of his early devotion to the public welfare. He inherited money enough so that he could have lived without work, and his frail health might have seemed ample justification for his living upon his inheritance. But he entered into politics determined to find a field of service, and he lived and wrought as Christopher Wren is justly declared to have done in that eloquent epitaph above the door of St. Paul's, "Non sibi, sed pro bono publico." Ambitious he doubtless was, but his was an ambition which rose above inertia and self-seeking and made him from the beginning of his life a man devoted to the public welfare.

### His Immense Virility

Whoever saw Col. Roosevelt was impressed by his genuine humanity and his immense virility. He believed in large families; he felt that America must stand or fall with its family life. But in his maleness was the virility of the athlete, not the excessive sexuality of the degenerate. He stood for vigor without self-indulgence.

Theodore Roosevelt lived intensely, but not narrowly. Whatever he did, he did it with his might. He appeared to have no subordinate interests. What he read and what he studied he read and studied with equal ardor, if not with equal interest. He did not have a single-track mind; his mind was a net-work of tracks, on any one of which he could run with the throttle wide open and his eye on the rails.

He lived intensely, and he did not cease to live in that fashion. Many people live intensely for a little time and then grow weary and react into lethargy. It appears impossible to hold the interest of the average man strongly and loyally for any great length of time. It was not so with Roosevelt. He lived the strenuous life and continued to live it. The warmth of his keen interest did not die down to cold ashes, nor even to the gentle glow of hot coals; to the end of his life he was a flaming torch.

It has been said with some justice that Roosevelt might better have lived more slowly and lived longer; but who knows that? A recent essayist has said:

"Roosevelt was so active a person—not to say so noisy and conspicuous; he so occupied the center of every stage, when he died, it was as though a wind had fallen, a light had gone out, a military band had stopped playing. It was not so much the death of an individual as a general lowering in the vitality of the nation. America was less America, because he was no longer here. He should have lived twenty years more had he been willing to go slow, to loaf and invite his soul, to feed that mind of his in a wise passiveness. But there was no repose about him, and his pleasures were as strenuous as his toils. John Burroughs tells us that he did not care for fishing, the contemplative man's recreation. No contemplation for him, but action; no angling in a clear stream for a trout or grayling, but the glorious, dangerous excitement of killing big game—grizzlies, lions, African buffaloes, mountain sheep, rhinoceroses, elephants. He never spared himself: he wore himself out. But doubtless he would have chosen the crowded hour of glorious life—or strife, for life and strife were with him the same."—From "Four Americans" by Henry Augustin Beers.

When Phillips Brooks was leaving the scene of his early ministry in Philadelphia to accept a call to Trinity Church in Boston, an elderly minister of his denomination congratulating him upon his promotion, said, "And now, my dear young brother, be prudent." "Stop," said Mr. Brooks, "if there is any one quality which a minister of the Episcopal Church does not need to cultivate it is prudence."

Theodore Roosevelt would have agreed with him. Prudence was one of the last of the virtues which he cultivated. Of him instead of George Luther Stearns, Whittier might have written,

"Ah, well!—the world is discreet;  
There are plenty to pause and wait;  
But here was a man who set his feet  
Sometimes in advance of fate,—  
"Plucked off the old bark when the inner  
Was slow to renew it,  
And put to the Lord's work the sinner  
When saints failed to do it."

Roosevelt impressed all men who met him with his tremendous vitality. To a cynical observer like Henry Adams, inclined to inertia and to critical analysis, such a man was an enigma, if not an anathema. Of him, Adams said, "Roosevelt, more than any man living within the range of notoriety, showed the singular primitive quality that belongs to ultimate matter—the quality mediaeval theology assigned to God—he was put act." (The Education of Henry Adams, p. 417.)

One always felt this quality in Roosevelt. I saw him once in the White House, dressed in a sack coat, moving swiftly from one item of business to another, seeming to make his decisions before anybody could tell him what he was deciding—a very great contrast to the calmness and quiet dignity which I have observed in other presidents. I have seen him a few times when he felt himself to be among friends and he laughed loudly and slapped

his thigh and applauded boisterously when a good story was told, or a song sung, but I am told by those who knew him well, and I can believe it, that his boisterousness never lent itself to vulgarity and that his conversation, which dealt with delicate matters in plain speech, abhorred any approach to obscenity.

To me he seemed to have complete faith in the infallibility of his own judgment. He would almost have seemed to meet that qualification for infallibility, which Cardinal Newman before he went over to Rome, expressed concerning the Pope:

"The Pope's claim to infallibility implies an additional claim. He must not only be infallible, but infallibly certain that he is infallible." Few Popes have been thus certain. They have usually left for themselves certain loop-holes for escape, in case it should later appear better for them not to claim to have been speaking ex cathedra. But Roosevelt never appeared to be troubled by any doubt on this score. Carlyle might have applied to him the word, which he uttered concerning Bismarck in 1866 after he had brought Austria to her knees:

"He is the only man who has been appointed by Almighty God his Vicegerent on this earth, and who knows that he has been appointed."

Yet those who knew Mr. Roosevelt best declared that behind his impulsiveness there was a genuine deliberation. In 1911 I sat in his office in the editorial rooms of *The Outlook* and talked with his associates concerning him. They told me that there was no man on the staff of *The Outlook* who was more considerate of the opinions of the other men, or one whose choices were made after more mature deliberation. Lawrence Abbott said to me on that occasion, "You know my father well, and you do not think of him as an impulsive man. Theodore Roosevelt is a more deliberate man than Lyman Abbott." I accept testimony such as this from the men who knew him intimately. Personally, I should not have thought him a deliberate man. He said of himself, "You think me impulsive, and perhaps I am: But I will tell you one thing: Never have I entered upon any great policy till I was satisfied that I had behind me a great body of the American people."

He was outspoken in his denunciation of "the timid good" and the "acidly cantankerous." He had a passion for justice, a towering ambition, a tremendous industry, a perfectly terrible sincerity.

Says his latest biographer, William Roscoe Thayer:

"Those of us who knew him knew him as the most astonishing expression of the creative spirit we had ever seen. His manifold talents, his protean interests, his tireless energy, his thunderbolts which he did not let loose as well as those he did: his masterful will, sheathed in self-control like a sword in its scabbard, would have rendered him superhuman had he not possessed other qualities which made him the best of playmates for mortals."

He had a towering ambition; so had Washington; so had Lincoln; but I do not think it was a selfish ambition. He was accused



of wanting to be a king. A recent editorial in *The Outlook* gives his characteristic reply, which he uttered with his characteristic break of voice and falsetto squeak:

"They don't know kings, and I do. A king is a cross between a perpetual Vice President and a leader of the Four Hundred."

Roosevelt was not ambitious to be king, because he knew he was greater than a king.

### His Claim to Greatness

Was Roosevelt a great man? He denied it. He said that he was not a genius. Speaking at Cambridge University he denied being either an athlete or a man of exceptional ability, but he claimed that in body and mind he endeavored to get the most possible out of such talents as he possessed, and this he believed to be the foundation of success. He said:

"I never was an athlete, although I have always led an outdoor life, and have accomplished something in it, simply because my theory is that most any man can do a great deal, if he will, by getting the utmost possible service out of the qualities that he actually possesses. \* \* The average man who is successful—the average statesman, the average public servant, the average soldier, who wins what we call great success—is not a genius. He is the man who has merely the ordinary qualities that he shares with his fellows, but who has developed those ordinary qualities to a more than ordinary degree."

As I saw Roosevelt, I cannot say that I was ever impressed with his greatness. He impressed me as a man of marvelous energy, a man of heroic purpose, of masterful resolution, of protean versatility. I never regarded him as a profound thinker, a man of philosophical acumen or exceptional reasoning power. His logical process appeared to me to be only the straight-forward application of common sense to the problem at hand. Nor was he an orator. His voice was harsh, and he abused it. It assailed the ears of his hearers with monotonous insistence, broken by occasional squeakings of falsetto.

His delivery was not pleasing. His one gesture was the hammer-blow of a clenched fist driving his point into the mind of the hearer. His facial expression was the tense scowl of a man of defective vision vehemently intent upon the business of biting off his argument in emphatic mouthfuls and spitting out his words as hard and as far as he was able. He was not precisely a pretty man; and the photographs of his face when he was speaking left little for the caricaturist to desire. The man who applied the term "gargoyle" to his appearance when addressing an audience was in his way as apt a phrase-coiner as Roosevelt himself when he condemned "pussyfooting" or hurled maledictions against the "malefactors of great wealth."

Moreover, Roosevelt had little of the art of persuasion, nor did he convince his hearers that he was impartial or judicial in all his utterances. I always felt that he was too intense to be judicial, and I seldom found myself following his argument with unqualified

approval. His very vehemence suggested that there must be something to be said on the other side, and his impetuosity raised the question whether he had carefully considered the subject in all its possible bearings.

But I never heard him when I doubted that he believed utterly every word that he was saying. I never was able to doubt for a moment his good faith or terrible earnestness. He could have said with the apostle, that he believed and therefore spoke; and he spoke with the assurance of a prophet of civic righteousness.

This, I believe, and not genius, was the secret of his success. I can hardly think of him as a great man in the sense that Washington seems to me to have been great. He did not tread the high levels of serene elevation of mind and character which we associate with the name of Washington. He did not descend into the depths of human sympathy which we contemplate with reverence when we think of Abraham Lincoln. But in his emphatic determination to know what was right and to do it, to give every normal interest "a square deal" and in the pursuit of any good end to "hit the line hard" he was a noble servant of his generation, and he personified the best in moral earnestness in the contemporary life of America.

Colonel Roosevelt knew that many people thought of him as belligerent, and ready to fight all comers at the drop of the hat. This suggestion woke his ready wit, and reminded his friends that during his administration of seven years his country was profoundly at peace with all nations; that he never began a war, but that he ended the war between Russia and Japan; that he was not an advocate of war, but the winner of the Nobel Peace Prize of \$40,000. As to his personality, he denied that he was pugnacious, but asserted that he was "an elderly literary gentleman with strong domestic tendencies!"

There was much of real truth in this; and as to his domestic tendencies, it is to be remarked that no President has succeeded in preserving in the White House a more normal home life, or one which he kept more free from the intrusion of the public, and that he gave to his country sons whose valor and public spirit are worthy of their heredity and training. One of his sons, in reply to a comment on the fact that they were all in service, said, "Father has been preaching patriotism all his life, and it is up to his sons to make good on their home teaching."

### **What Would Roosevelt Have Done to Germany?**

It does not lie within the province of this address to compare Roosevelt with Wilson. Two men more unlike in temperament would be difficult to imagine, but we can hardly deny ourselves the privilege of some curiosity as to what would have happened if Roosevelt had been in the White House on the morning of April 23, 1915, when the New York Times printed a paid advertisement, inserted by the representatives of the German Government in America, warning Americans not to sail on the Lusitania on her next voyage. In Thayer's new biography of Roosevelt he relates

that he asked Roosevelt what he would have done under those conditions. He answered that he would have sent at once for Bernstorff and asked him whether the advertisement was official and he was sure Bernstorff, arch-liar that he was, could not have denied it. "I should then have sent to the Department of State to prepare his passports; I should have handed them to him and said, 'You will sail on the Lusitania yourself next Friday; an American guard will see you on board and prevent your coming ashore.'"

Under those conditions we might possibly have had war with Germany sooner than we did, but the Lusitania would not have sunk.

### <sup>1</sup>His Religion

There is another quality in Roosevelt which I must not fail to mention. He was a religious man. When he was a student in Harvard University, he took his stand as a young man who cared for religion. He was a Sunday School teacher in those days, though decidedly a militant one.

In writing of Mr. Roosevelt's young manhood Mr. Thayer says:

"Theodore taught Sunday School at Christ Church, but he was so muscular a Christian that the decorous vestrymen thought him an unwise guide in piety. For one day a boy came to class with a black eye which he had got in fighting a larger boy for pinching his sister. Theodore told him that he did perfectly right—that every boy ought to defend any girl from insult—and he gave him a dollar as a reward. The vestrymen decided that this was too flagrant approval of fisticuffs; so the young teacher soon found a welcome in the Sunday School of a different denomination."

Roosevelt's religion was simple, unostentatious and genuine. He made no parade of it, neither did he ever conceal it. His addresses were sermons; they made free use of Scripture, which he employed with telling effect. He met the sorrows that came to him with a courage that belongs to sincere Christian faith. He lived and died a professed and earnest follower of Jesus Christ. He was a muscular Christian, a red-blooded Christian, a militant Christian, a Christian whose religion represented in manly form the qualities of the heroic virtues of his own nation and his own time.

Roosevelt's minister called him "America's most typical American." The characterization is not unjust. But a man may typify a thing and not always justly represent it. A type may become so generic as to lose all individuality. Theodore Roosevelt never became so typical as to lose one whit of his individuality. He never said to himself, "I will seek to be the typical American." He was Theodore Roosevelt, by the grace of God; American, and was true to type.

America can never live on the names of her great men in the past. She must create new heroes out of the stuff of her common manhood. She must take of the dust of her ordinary life and breathe her breath into it and make a living soul that has manhood and a name. America is born to hero-worship, a kind of

irreverent hero worship that often whips the gods it prays to, but hero-worship none the less. The mind of America demands concreteness; it learns by object lessons. The whole nation has in it this much of the characteristic which it attributes to one state southwest of us—it wants to be shown. It wants to be shown concretely. It demands personality. It can never worship an abstract formula; it wants character erect and aloof.

Henry Duff Traill was not thinking of German history but of that of his own nation, England, when he wrote his warning poem:

“As one who from the glacier past the vine  
Follows the slow debasement of the Rhine  
To where its foiled and sluggish waters creep  
Through sand-obstructed channels to the deep.”

Even so, warned the poet, nations of noble birth and glorious history confront the peril of the Rhine with its glacier-born source, its vine-fringed course, and its muddy and sand-clogged estuary. Such fate will never come to America so long as out of her common manhood she produces great characters, and then by the consensus of her wisdom, she selects these men to be her prophets and rulers.

These men must represent all the various types of success and walks of life: but one poet would be worth to Chicago, more than ten packers, and one prophet of the soul more than ten poets.

A nation's commercial prosperity depends upon the fertility of its soil, the abundance of its natural resources in timber and in minerals, the activity of its workshops, its convenient and economical means of transportation within its own domain and its access to the ocean for foreign trade. But a nation's real greatness cannot be measured wholly in terms of commercial prosperity. A nation is not necessarily great because it is big nor prosperous because it is rich.

“Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,  
Where wealth accumulates and men decay.”

The final test of a nation's greatness is the quality of manhood which it produces. We who live in America, and who are under constant temptation to confuse greatness with bigness, need to remind ourselves again and again that America's true glory is not to be found in the capacity of her grain elevators or the size of her bank clearings or the magnitude of her coal mines or the number of acres in her stock-yards, but in the quality of her manhood. The real ground of America's glory is the character of her great men. Let America plow her fields until her harvests are multiplied tenfold; let her dig her mines to the center of the earth with ever increasing reward for her labor and inventive genius; let her bind the tides of Atlantic to those of Pacific with a hundred transcontinental railways, let the steamship bear the stars and stripes to every port in the seven seas; still is her supreme glory in none of these. It is in the genius, the patriotism, the nobility of soul revealed in her George Washington and Alexander Hamilton and John Marshall; her John Adams and Thomas Jefferson and Benja-

min Franklin; her Andrew Jackson and Henry Clay and Daniel Webster; her Charles Sumner and Ulysses S. Grant and Abraham Lincoln; her William Howard Taft and Theodore Roosevelt.

### Washington, Lincoln and Roosevelt

A half century and more ago the Boys in Blue went forth to put down the rebellion, and they sang much of hanging Jeff Davis to a sour apple tree. When the war was over, it was not Jefferson Davis who was buried, but Abraham Lincoln. And the death of Lincoln did for America what the death of Davis never could have wrought.

Another war has been fought and won. Our boys went out vowing that they would bring back to America the scalp of the Kaiser. The man who was the kaiser lives, but the world weeps at the grave of Theodore Roosevelt.

The two deaths are not completely parallel. The death of Lincoln, so tragic, so shocking, had elements that do not enter into the death of Roosevelt. We cannot add him to our list of martyr presidents, thank God, but we have added him to our list of national heroes. We can say of him as Stanton said when Lincoln breathed his last, "Now he belongs to the ages."

He belongs to the ages as Lincoln belongs to them, as America's typical and triumphant contribution to the ideals of humanity. He was American as in his day George Washington was American. He was American as Lincoln was American, and the world is learning every day how well the name Lincoln spells America. In an age when the world interpreted the American ideal in terms of dollars and cents, Theodore Roosevelt stood as the embodiment of American energy, American scholarship, American courage, American character devoted to the public good, and above all, as the incarnation of the American conscience.

What was the greatest contribution which Theodore Roosevelt made to the life of his generation? This, as it seems to me, that in the eyes of America and the world, he defined anew in terms of personality, the ideal of America. The world had need of such a representation as he set forth of our national character and ideals. The world had seen or thought it had seen America's character defined in terms of money and the love of it. America needs, and the world needs, continually to correct its easy definition of Americanism. We need to know and to have it known that America is a nation of idealists. The world learned that anew in Theodore Roosevelt.

With the death of Roosevelt there has gone out of American life a mighty reinforcement of all that was best in the spirit of America. The heart of America bows with grief at his death, "as when a standard-bearer falleth." He stood so fearlessly, so tenaciously, so unconquerably for the things that America best loved and most believed in, he seemed the incarnation of our ideal and hope.

For sixty-five years from his death until the close of the Civil

War, America found its ideal in George Washington. From the day of his assassination in 1865 until now, the nation has expressed its ideal in the words and characteristics of Abraham Lincoln. We now have a third name to add to this noble pair. Theodore Roosevelt in his day defined in terms of flesh and blood the name American.

Pious people of a former generation were much devoted to inquiry as to the last words of a dying man or woman; we are not yet wholly past it, and the newspapers have been quoting Roosevelt's last published utterance on the abolition of the hyphen from American citizenship. "We have room," he said, "for only one flag, the American flag; and this excludes the red flag. We have room for but one language, and that the English language."

But if I were to choose of his public utterances what I think he might have been glad to have us think as his creed of American life and destiny, it would be this:

"We here in America hold in our hands the hope of the world, the fate of coming years; and shame and disgrace will be ours if in our eyes the light of high resolve is dimmed; if we train in the dust the golden hope of men."

He who was buried a little more than a year ago in a village cemetery on Long Island, with a dignified simplicity and absence of ostentation which are a commendable example to his countrymen, worthily served America by his loyalty, his patriotism and his militant courage, and left that country immeasurably richer for the heritage of his example and his name. We do well to honor him; for the honor in which the world held his nation before he was born is greatly enhanced by his life and service.

Well may the circling aeroplanes hover lovingly above his grave, and drop their wreaths upon the last resting place of the man who gave himself, his four sons, and all his love and ardent hope to America. And well may America pause when such a man dies, and lift its reverent heart to God in thanks that America still has in her the stuff for the making of such manhood. Here was a man who hurled back into the teeth of the world the lie that American character can be expressed in terms of money. Here was a man who lived greatly and simply and triumphantly, and whose personality and ideals kindled the imagination of his country, and no one thinks to ask how much money he had. By force of character, by devotion to the public welfare, by fearless love of righteousness, and by faith in God and in the American people, he wrought righteousness, obtained promises, subdued kingdoms, dug the Panama Canal, reclaimed vast tracts of desert territory and made it blossom like the rose, and exalted in the minds of all men everywhere the world's definition of an American. He has made it for every one of us who faces the duties of life in like spirit, a nobler thing to be an American.



# **The Soul of Abraham Lincoln**

By **WILLIAM E. BARTON**

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**A notable contribution to the literature of the subject, and a book of permanent worth**

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